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Alaska Region

Regional Accessibility Strategy

for

Recreation Programs
and
Administrative Sites/Facilities

November 18, 1998



Alaska Region

REGIONAL ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

for

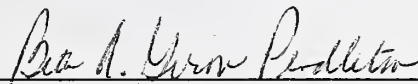
RECREATION PROGRAMS

and

ADMINISTRATIVE SITES/FACILITIES

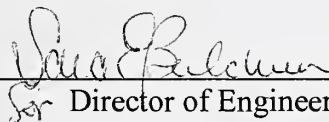
November 18, 1998

Recommended by:



Director of Public Services

Recommended by:



for Director of Engineering and
Aviation Management

Approved by:



Regional Forester

Alaska Region
REGIONAL ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY
 for
RECREATION PROGRAMS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITES/FACILITIES

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Alaska Region
REGIONAL ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY
for
RECREATION PROGRAMS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITES/FACILITIES
October 6, 1998

I. BACKGROUND

The USDA Forest Service and its cooperators are required to incorporate access standards into all of the agency's "Federally Conducted" or "Federally Assisted" facilities, programs, services, or activities. This direction is mandated in one or more of the following laws and regulations:

- The Architectural Barriers Act, 1968.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, 1978.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 1990.
- Code of Federal Regulations, 7 CFR 15(e).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amplified by the ADA, states: "People with disabilities will be provided the fullest integrated program or service as possible or feasible." A public entity may not refuse to: "Provide an individual with a disability with an equal opportunity to participate or benefit from its programs or activities . . .," and may not

" . . . deny the right to participate in or fully benefit from the aid, from the service provided. These aids, benefits, and services must be equal to those provided to others and be as effective in affording equal opportunity to obtain the same results, to gain the same benefit or to reach the same level of achievement as those provided to others."

7 CFR 15(e) is the USDA implementation of Section 504. The CFR specifies how USDA agencies will conduct programs and activities so that they are in compliance with 504. Both 504 and 7 CFR 15(e) focus on program access and accessibility to those programs which involve any related facilities. When structural changes are needed to facilitate program access, Section 150 of the CFR requires development of a transition plan which must include the following:

- Identify accessibility obstacles.
- Describe details of planned actions.
- Specify timeframes for accomplishment of planned actions.
- Identify responsible plan implementation official.

Agencies must also provide an opportunity for individuals with disabilities and organizations which serve them to participate in the development of transition plans, orally and in writing.

A "program" can be defined as a reason a person visits an area. For example: at a visitor center, the program might be to gather information or to learn something about an area; at a scenic overlook, the primary program is the viewing of scenery; in wilderness, the program is to enjoy solitude with physical challenges and self-reliance; at an employment office, the program is to

obtain information regarding employment; and so forth. The "responsible official" is the person responsible for assigning money and personnel to accomplish the action items identified in the transition plan; Forest Supervisors will determine the "responsible official".

Changes to ensure equal access must be made even though agency resources are very limited. Under 504, we are legally required to develop some means of providing accessibility to our PROGRAMS. The standard of measure is "the program viewed in its entirety." Agencies have the option of moving programs to accessible facilities, and in doing so, must inform the public of the accessible program location. In some cases that may mean relocating a program until a facility can be retrofitted. Failure to make modifications to a program to permit participation by persons with disabilities is discriminatory "unless the entity can demonstrate that making such modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, privileges, advantages, or accommodations." It is important to note that the Department of Justice has ruled that, for Federal agencies, no improvement for accessibility can be avoided on the basis that it would be too costly. Only if that single improvement were to exceed the total resources of the Agency (note: NOT the Forest or Ranger District) would an exception be granted.

The term "accessible" will be applied only to those facilities, programs, and/or sites which meet the standards defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). This is consistent with the definition of "accessible" provided in the Forest Service Infrastructure Handbook and with advice from the National Access Board. Facilities, programs, and sites which meet the guidelines outlined in the "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation, A Design Guide" (aka, Design Guide), and/or which are primarily and essentially accessible with one or more minor deviations, may be termed "usable" when accompanied by information identifying how the facility, program, or site deviates from ADAAG standards.

II. PURPOSE

The following is a summary of the Desired Future Condition identified in the "Region 10 Accessibility Task Force Report" presented to the Regional Leadership Team on February 5, 1997.

All programs and services in the Alaska Region are accessible to people with disabilities. A wide range of accessible recreation sites and trails is available commensurate with desired recreation settings and experiences. The accessibility levels of our facilities, programs, and services are well-known; information is readily available to both the public and employees. Administrative facilities are free of architectural barriers. The Alaska Region is an employer of choice for people with disabilities.

This document provides guidance for determining the accessibility of administrative sites/structures and the accessibility of programs outside the realm of forest service administration; for developing transition plans to identify and prioritize needed improvements; and for establishing the basis by which funds will be allocated to accomplish needed work.

The Forest Accessibility Strategy Guidelines (Attachment A) may be modified for use by the Forest/Areas but the outcome must stay the same: development of documents which contain the

essential elements of required transition plans; solicitation of public involvement in the planning process; and creation of an umbrella for making future decisions. Future requests for construction funds must be directly linked to a Forest Accessibility Strategy.

III. FOREST ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGIES

Accessibility Strategies or Transition Plans must be developed whenever structural changes are needed to facilitate program access. Assessing the accessibility of a program is the first step in developing a Transition Plan. The following recreation programs have been identified within the Alaska Region:

1. Camping.
2. Fishing and Boating.
3. Hiking and Trail Use.
4. Information Dissemination (including, but not limited to, information, interpretation, environmental education).
5. Special Use Permit (exclusive of personal use permits).
6. Picnicking and Day Use.
7. Public Recreation Cabin.
8. Wilderness.

Each Forest/Area should identify the recreation programs specific to their area, either drawing from this list or identifying additional or different programs. Suggested goals for the eight recreation program areas identified above and for administrative sites/facilities, along with strategies for reaching these goals, are outlined in Attachment A of this document. Note that the accessibility of programs related to administration, e.g. employment and personnel, will be addressed in other documents such as the Region 10 Civil Rights Implementation Plan.

The processes outlined in Attachment A are provided as guidance for use by the Forest/Areas in developing their Strategies aka Transition Plan(s). A Forest may:

- develop one Accessibility Strategy for each of the eight recreation program areas identified above;
- develop Accessibility Strategies for each of several different geographical areas under a single recreation program area, as suggested in the guidelines in Attachment A;
- identify additional recreation program areas available on their unit; and/or
- identify different recreation program areas than the eight identified above.

Regardless of the exact process used for recreation programs, each Forest, Area, or District (scope to be determined by the Forest Supervisor who will also determine the "responsible official" as defined in Section I of this document) will develop and keep current a Forest Administrative Site/Structure Accessibility Strategy which provides overall direction for improvement of administrative site/structure accessibility on that unit.

The accessibility of all programs must be assessed and documented. Until we have National direction as to what constitutes an accessible program, Region 10 direction will be to evaluate

programs and the structures and site alterations which support a program against the percentages shown below. Programs which meet the standards set below are considered accessible. For example, within an assessment area defined by the unit (may be geographic, administrative, or user-based), in a Rural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) setting, the campground program may be considered accessible if 20% of the campsites in each developed campground in that assessment area are accessible. The percentages below are based on indications from the ongoing work of the Outdoor Developed Regulatory Negotiation Committee which is developing accessibility guidelines for outdoor recreation; this direction may change as regulations are adopted.

1. Camping - 20% of the campsites of developed campgrounds in Urban and Rural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) settings meet ADAAG; 20% of the developed campsites in Roaded Natural and Semi-Primitive ROS settings meet the guidelines defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation, A Design Guide."
2. Fishing and Boating - 10% of the developed fishing sites in Urban and Rural ROS settings meet ADAAG; 10% of the developed fishing sites in Roaded Natural and Semi-Primitive ROS settings meet the guidelines defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation, A Design Guide." 10% of the developed boating facilities in Urban and Rural ROS settings meet ADAAG (exclusive of anchor buoys).
3. Hiking and Trail Use - 20% of the trails in Urban and Rural settings meet ADAAG; 10% of the trails in Roaded Natural ROS settings and 5% of the trails in Semi-Primitive ROS settings meet the guidelines defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation, A Design Guide."
4. Information Dissemination - 100% of the developed site interpretive themes and subthemes (the major ideas) and the essence of information messages are accessible to the extent feasible and practicable utilizing universal design principles.
5. Special Use Permit (exclusive of personal use permits) - 100% of permits meet Title VI, permit administrators are knowledgeable about accessibility issues and requirements, and permit holders are advised of their responsibilities surrounding accessibility issues.
6. Picnicking and Day Use - 20% of the picnic sites in developed picnic areas and 20% of the developed day use sites in Urban and Rural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) settings meet ADAAG; 20% of the developed picnic sites and developed day use sites in Roaded Natural and Semi-Primitive ROS settings meet the guidelines defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation, A Design Guide."
7. Public Recreation Cabins (outside Wilderness) - 10% of the cabins (inclusive of cabin, cabin site, associated structures/attractions, and path of travel between site structures/attractions; exclusive of path of travel to the site) in an area defined by the Forest (may be geographic, administrative, or user-based) meet ADAAG to the extent feasible.
8. Wilderness, Public Recreation Cabins - 10% of Public Recreation Cabins and associated structures (constructed features only; exclusive of site and path of travel) in an area defined by the Forest (may be a single Wilderness, a portion of a Wilderness, or more than one Wilderness) meet ADAAG to the extent feasible.

Programs documented as being accessible do not need an Accessibility Strategy. An Accessibility Strategy is required only for those programs determined not to be accessible. Each Accessibility Strategy shall include the following five items:

1. Identify accessibility obstacles.
2. Describe details of planned actions.
3. Specify timeframes for accomplishment of planned actions.
4. Identify responsible plan implementation official.
5. Solicit public involvement.

A simple example of a completed, hypothetical transition plan is attached to this document (Attachment B).

The timeline for completion of the strategies is as follows:

| TASK | DEADLINE |
|---|--|
| Submit to Regional Office a draft Accessibility Strategy for those areas or programs which include projects being submitted for special accessibility funding consideration, CNTR and CNRF. | February 26, 1999 |
| Drafts for all Accessibility Strategies are complete and public involvement is well underway. | May 1, 1999 |
| Submit to Regional Office a final, Forest Supervisor approved Accessibility Strategy for those areas or programs which include projects being submitted for inclusion on the Capital Investment Program list. | Fall, 1999 (one month prior to Fall CIP mtg, exact date TBD) |
| All Accessibility Strategies complete and Forest Supervisor approved. | December 31, 1999 |

IV. INCENTIVES

A "Managing Work Assignments" performance standard for line officers, e.g.: "Demonstrates commitment to ensuring Forest Service provided and Forest Service supported programs are accessible to all persons including persons with disabilities."

Annual awards to Supervisor's Office and/or Ranger District Office for best accessibility program and/or greatest demonstration of commitment to the accessibility program (recognition may be monetary or non-monetary).

Recreation Capital Investment Program (CIP) funding tied to completed Forest Accessibility Strategies; a project will not be added to the Recreation CIP list unless it is addressed in a completed Forest Accessibility Strategy.

V. FUNDING STRATEGIES

If more than 5% of a unit's NFFA allocation is unobligated at fiscal year end, the amount of the funds over 5% will be consolidated regionally for redistribution the following year. Any available surplus identified at mid-year will also be consolidated for redistribution. Redistributed funds will be directed towards accessibility projects related to Region 10 administrative facilities which are identified in Forest Accessibility Strategies.

Units may use QMQM collections to accomplish minor accessibility retrofits of living quarters.

Starting in fiscal year 1999, regionally program \$100,000 of CNFA for accessibility retrofits that are tied to the Forest Accessibility Strategy. In subsequent years, continue to program funds for accessibility retrofits.

Starting in fiscal year 1999, regionally program up to \$100,000 of CNRF for accessibility retrofits that are tied to the Forest Accessibility Strategy. Attached, listed by priority, are criteria to be used for distribution of these funds (Attachment C).

Utilize volunteer groups such as the Telephone Pioneers of America and Trail Mix to accomplish work related to improvements in accessibility.

Units may use NFFA or benefitting funds to accomplish minor accessibility retrofits such as a bathroom renovation, ramp reconstruction, etc.

Units may request reprogramming of benefitting funds to accomplish accessibility projects that are considered "minor construction" projects, i.e., a building addition to accommodate a new elevator in a multistory building. Authorized reprogramming limits are those specified in the applicable appropriations bill.

VI. REPORTING/MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Submit draft Forest Accessibility Strategies to the Regional Forester with copies to the Director of Public Services and the Director of Engineering and Aviation Management (2300, 7300) | May 1, 1999 |
| Submit completed Forest Accessibility Strategies to the Regional Forester with copies to the Director of Public Services and the Director of Engineering and Aviation Management (2300, 7300) | December 31, 1999 |
| Report to the Regional Forester on the progress made in their accessibility program in the previous 12 months. For record purposes, this report must be suitable for filing but need not be formal and may take whatever form best communicates the accomplishments made. Copies of the report will be sent to the Director of Public Services, the Director of Engineering and Aviation Management, and the Director of Operations (1700, 2310, 7310) | March 1, Annually |
| Submit copies of Title VI reviews conducted the previous calendar year. Copies shall be submitted to the Regional Forester with copies to the Director of Public Services and the Director of Operations (1700, 2300) | January 31, Annually |
| Conduct a formal review of the Accessibility Program throughout the Region every 5 years. This review will be conducted by a team from the following Regional staff units: Public Services, Engineering and Aviation, and Operations | May 1, Annually |

Attachment A

FOREST ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY GUIDELINES

CAMPING PROGRAM

Goals

1. All recreation users have access to a variety of experiences with varying degrees of challenges commensurate with the setting.
2. Campground sites, paths, and furnishings in the Urban and Rural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Classes meet the standards set in the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG); minor site and pathway exceptions may exist due to environmental constraints.
3. Campground sites and paths in the Roaded Natural ROS Class provide at least a moderate level of access as defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide"; minor exceptions may exist due to environmental constraints. Campground furnishings in the Roaded Natural ROS Class meet ADAAG standards.
4. Information on the accessibility of camping opportunities is accessible to people with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairments, developmental disabilities, hearing impairments, etc. A variety of information formats are available, as necessary.

Standards and Guidelines

Utilize the recreation opportunity spectrum setting and the desired experience to determine the target level of accessibility as defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide." The accessibility of each camping facility is commensurate with its setting and the desired recreation experience.

Utilize universal design principles in the planning and design of all new campsites and, to the extent practical, in retrofits of existing sites and facilities. All new picnic tables, firerings and grills, hydrants, and restrooms meet ADAAG standards.

Public participation will be solicited and documented in steps 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the process outlined below.

Rationale used in making decisions, determining target levels and priorities, and developing criteria will be documented.

Process

1. List existing campgrounds.
2. Identify known accessible camping opportunities.
3. Provide information on accessible camping opportunities to the public; information should be in sufficient detail to allow potential users to make an informed decision about their ability to use the facilities provided. Emphasize providing the information to persons with disabilities and organizations which target service to persons with disabilities. This prioritization will reflect the needs/desires of the public and may guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.
4. Group campgrounds by:
 - a. Their association with a community, geographic area, or region, and/or,
 - b. Their primary attraction or experience. As an example, campgrounds in the Ward Lake Recreation Area might be grouped with all campgrounds whose primary access point is Ketchikan and further subgrouped by association with a lake, stream, or saltwater.
5. Prioritize campground groups identified in the previous step (separate plans may be done for each group), reflecting the needs/desires of the public, to guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.
6. Determine target level of accessibility for each campground utilizing the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and striving to ensure accessibility to the range of experiences provided in each group.
7. Identify potential action items to improve accessibility of the camping program.
 - a. Known opportunities to improve accessibility (e.g.: a campground or portion of a campground with topography, grades, and/or other site factors suggesting easy access potential).
 - b. Known barriers to accessibility (e.g.: an inaccessible table(s) in an otherwise accessible campground).
 - c. Need for additional survey information (e.g.: insufficient information is known about a campground or campsite to determine accessibility level or to identify specific actions needed to improve accessibility).
 - d. Need to locate and develop a new camping facility (e.g.: the work done to date has identified a campground experience without an appropriate level of accessibility and little potential for retrofitting existing facilities/sites).
8. Prioritize and schedule identified action items. Each forest/area will determine and document criteria for setting priorities. Suggested emphasis is on improving the accessibility of high-use

facilities, providing information to all people on accessible opportunities, and ensuring that everyone has access to all the experiences we are providing.

FISHING AND BOATING PROGRAM

Goals

1. Fishers and boaters have access to a variety of experiences.
2. Fishing and boating facilities in the Urban and Rural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Classes meet the standards set in the Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG); minor site or pathway exceptions may exist due to environmental constraints.
3. Fishing and boating facilities in the Roaded Natural ROS Class provide at least a moderate level of access as defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide"; minor exceptions may exist due to environmental constraints.
4. Universal design principles are incorporated into the planning and construction of all new fishing and boating facilities and, to the extent practical, in retrofits of existing facilities.
5. Information on the accessibility of fishing and boating opportunities is accessible to people with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairments, developmental disabilities, hearing impairments, etc. A variety of information formats are available, as necessary.

Standards and Guidelines

A forest/area which does not provide developed fishing or boating facilities does not need to add fishing or boating facilities solely to accommodate persons with disabilities.

Public participation will be solicited and documented in steps 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the process outlined below.

Rationale used in making decisions, determining target levels and priorities, and developing criteria will be documented.

Process

1. List existing fishing and/or boating facilities.
2. Identify known accessible fishing/boating opportunities.
3. Provide information on accessible fishing/boating opportunities to the public; information should be in sufficient detail to allow potential users to make an informed decision about their ability to use the facilities provided. Emphasize providing the information to persons with disabilities and organizations which target service to persons with disabilities.
4. Group fishing/boating facilities by:
 - a. Their association with a community, geographic area, or region, and/or;

- b. Their primary attraction or experience.
5. Prioritize fishing/boating groups identified in the previous step (separate plans may be done for each group), reflecting the needs/desires of the public, to guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.
 6. Determine target level of accessibility for each fishing/boating opportunity utilizing the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, striving to ensure accessibility to the range of experiences provided in each group.
 7. Identify potential action items to improve accessibility of the fishing and/or boating program.
 - a. Known opportunities to improve accessibility (e.g.: an existing fishing platform with topography, grades, and/or other site factors suggesting easy access potential).
 - b. Known barriers to accessibility (e.g.: an existing boat dock on consistently rough waters or extreme tide changes).
 - c. Need for additional survey information (e.g.: one or more existing fishing platforms have been identified but insufficient information has been gathered to determine whether any of them are or may be readily made accessible).
 - d. Need to locate and develop a new fishing or boating facility (e.g.: the work done to date has identified one or more existing fishing or boating facilities which do not have an appropriate level of accessibility and which have little potential for successful retrofit).
 8. Prioritize and schedule identified action items. Each forest/area will determine and document criteria for setting priorities. Suggested emphasis is on improving the accessibility of high-use facilities, providing information to all people on accessible opportunities, and ensuring accessibility to the range of experiences we are providing.

HIKING AND TRAIL USE PROGRAM

For purposes of this document the term "trail" shall be understood to include the related trailhead, interpretive signs, and other related facilities integral to the experience of an individual trail. Completion of the process outlined below for a single trail group (identified in step 7) will constitute a completed Transition Plan when signed by the responsible official.

Goals

1. Region 10 offers a wide range of accessible hiking opportunities.
2. Trail users have information about and access to a variety of experiences with varying degrees of challenges.
3. Information on the accessibility of trails is accessible to people with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairments, developmental disabilities, hearing impairments, etc. A variety of information formats are available, as necessary.
4. The level of accessibility of each trail is communicated to users through signage and trail guides. Information is comprehensive enough that users may make informed choices.
5. Each trail group identified in step 7 of the process outlined below provides a range of accessible trail opportunities and a variety of levels of difficulty.

Standards and Guidelines

The accessibility of each trail is commensurate with its setting and the desired recreation experience.

Utilize universal design principles in the planning and design of all new trails and, to the extent practical, in retrofits of existing trails and associated facilities.

At a minimum, public participation will be solicited and documented in steps 8, 9, 10, and 11 of the process outlined below.

Rationale used in making decisions, determining target levels and priorities, and developing criteria will be documented.

Process

1. List trails.
2. Identify known fully accessible trails and trail segments.
3. Provide information about known accessible trail opportunities to the public; information should be in sufficient detail to allow potential users to make an informed decision about their ability to use the facilities provided. Emphasize providing the information to persons with disabilities and organizations which target service to persons with disabilities.
4. Identify the most heavily used trails.
5. Survey the most heavily used trails.
6. Provide detailed information to users about the barriers and accessibility of each heavily used trail.
7. Group all trails by association with a community, geographic area, or region.
8. Prioritize trail groups identified in the previous step (separate plans may be done for each group), reflecting the needs/desires of the public, to guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.
9. Determine target level of accessibility for each trail and/or trail segment in each trail group. Ensure a range of opportunities and a variety of levels of difficulty in each trail group.
10. Identify potential action items which will:
 - a. Improve the accessibility of trails;
 - b. Gather additional information (surveys) on trails;
 - c. Improve information dissemination to trail users;
 - d. Improve the range of opportunities available to trail users.
11. Prioritize and schedule identified action items with emphasis on:
 - a. Providing information to trail users;
 - b. Removing and maintaining barrier-free condition of high use trails in the "easy" level of difficulty;
 - c. Maintaining a range of opportunities and a variety of difficulty levels.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION PROGRAM

Goals

1. New administrative facilities are designed to be free of architectural barriers. Existing administrative facilities are free of architectural barriers to the extent feasible.
2. Alternative formats are provided for publications, communication tools, and interpretation and information services, as needed.
3. Information about accessible facilities, programs, and services is available to all customers, as needed, including, but not limited to, people with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairments, developmental disabilities, hearing impairments, etc.
4. Employees have knowledge of the accessibility of facilities, programs, and services.
5. Universal design principles are incorporated into the planning and development of brochures, maps, videos, signs, etc., and, to the extent practical, in retrofits and/or updates of existing materials.

Standards and Guidelines

Large print (12 point minimum) will be used wherever feasible and practical. Printed materials, such as brochures, will be made available in alternative formats and will include a statement such as the following: "This material is available in large type upon request."

New interpretive plans shall address accessibility. Emphasis will be on ensuring the accessibility of themes and sub-themes to all customers.

Video productions for national audiences and public service announcements shall be closed-captioned. Video productions for visitor centers and other public facilities shall be open-captioned. Visitor centers shall provide assistive devices, such as audio loops for persons with hearing impairments, headphones that provide an audio description for persons with visual impairments, and electronic signing for persons who are deaf.

Text telephones (TTYs) shall be in place, functioning, and managed in every office.

Sign planning for new, replacement, or rehabilitated signs shall include consideration of accessibility (i.e., letter size, contrast, color, location or siting, aspect to viewer, lighting, graphics, and tactile or other alternative methods of communicating the sign's information) by all users.

Meetings shall be held only in accessible meeting locations. Meeting announcements will include a notice offering sign language interpretation or other assistive device. Audio amplification will be provided when group size, individual needs, or environmental conditions warrant.

Information provided in offices or other places of public contact shall be available to all persons. Where barriers exist, the barrier will be eliminated or the information will be provided in an alternative location or format.

At a minimum, public participation will be solicited and documented in steps 2 and 3 of the process outlined below.

Rationale used in making decisions, determining target levels and priorities, and developing criteria will be documented.

Process

1. List Forest/Area produced or provided interpretive, informational, and other communication devices, grouped as follows. A forest/area may identify additional devices.

- a. Written and print information--emphasize high-volume and/or regularly used. (The Regional Office is responsible for accessibility of publications of a regional nature such as: "Alaska's National Forests"; "Camping" (1 page); "Cabins" (1 page); "Marine Recreation"; "Wildflowers"; and "Sourdough Notes".)
- b. Interpretive plans.
- c. Environmental education programs.
- d. Accessible meeting locations and sources for associated, assistive aids such as sign language interpreters, audio amplifiers, etc.
- e. Video productions.
- f. Text telephone (TTY) locations and responsible person and/or position.
- g. Offices and other public contact points.
- h. Interpretive signs and exhibits not listed in interpretive plans.

2. For each group listed in the previous step, identify potential action items which will improve access to information:

- a. Known opportunities to improve accessibility (e.g.: add captioning to "Voices from the Ice" video).
- b. Known barriers to accessibility (e.g.: interpretation in a forest office which cannot be accessed due to physical limitations of the building).
- c. Need for additional survey information (e.g.: to assess the suitability of potential meeting sites).

- d. Need to develop an alternative communication tool (e.g.: add tactile displays to supplement the text of signs and to communicate with persons with sight impairments).
3. Prioritize and schedule action items identified in the previous step. Emphasize:
- a. Retrofitting administrative sites with heavy public use which were constructed after 1968.
 - b. Training of operators and monitoring of text telephones.
 - c. Updating existing interpretive plans that do not address accessibility.
 - d. Using only accessible spaces for public meetings.
 - e. Simplifying and highlighting the primary messages we give to the public.
 - f. Improving accessibility of high volume printed information. Forests may develop additional areas of emphasis to aid in setting priorities.

Intentionally
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SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROGRAM

Goals

1. All special use permits are in compliance with Title VI.
2. Recreation service providers have information about and understanding of their responsibilities related to non- discrimination.
3. All special use permit administrators are knowledgeable of access laws, regulations, and policies relating to special use authorizations.
4. Persons with disabilities have access to the range of services, programs, and experiences provided by special use permittees.

Standards and Guidelines

No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Special use permit administrators shall encourage permit holders to make special provisions to accommodate persons with disabilities; any special provisions shall be consistent with the setting and experience of the permitted use.

Utilize the publication "Universal Access: Guidelines for Outfitters Operating on Public Lands" as a framework for providing good customer service to permit holders and the public.

When public involvement reveals a need for accessible programs, services, or facilities which are not or cannot be provided by the Forest Service, the Forest Service will work with private enterprise and other agencies to meet these needs.

Process

1. Discuss with a permit applicant, prior to award, their responsibilities related to non-discrimination and how they will meet these responsibilities.
2. Provide recipients with signs and/or posters appropriate for posting when awarding a special use permit.
3. Ensure operating plans address program accessibility specific to the permitted use. Encourage permittees to define the "essential" activities of the experience they offer, establish performance criteria for participation, and apply these criteria equally to everyone.
4. During annual permit inspections, include and document a discussion with the permit holder of accessibility related needs, problems, and solutions associated with the specific permitted use and associated facilities.

5. Document compliance reviews for non-discrimination assurances and requirements on form 1700-4.
6. Encourage permittees to market the aspects of their program/service that specifically meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

PICNICKING, DAY USE PROGRAM

Goals

1. All recreation users have access to a variety of experiences with varying degrees of challenges commensurate with the setting.
2. Day use sites, paths, and furnishings in the Urban and Rural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Classes meet the standards set in the Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG); minor site and pathway exceptions may exist due to environmental constraints.
3. Day use sites and paths in the Roaded Natural ROS Class provide at least a moderate level of access as defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide"; minor exceptions may exist due to environmental constraints. Day use furnishings in the Roaded Natural ROS Class meet ADAAG standards.
4. Information on the accessibility of picnicking and day use opportunities is accessible to people with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairments, developmental disabilities, hearing impairments, etc. A variety of information formats are available, as necessary.

Standards and Guidelines

Utilize the recreation opportunity spectrum setting and the desired experience to determine the target level of accessibility as defined in "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide."

Utilize universal design principles in the planning and design of all new day use sites and facilities and, to the extent practical, in retrofits of existing sites and facilities. All new picnic tables, firerings and grills, hydrants, and restrooms meet ADAAG standards.

Public participation will be solicited and documented in steps 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the process outlined below.

Rationale used in making decisions, determining target levels and priorities, and developing criteria will be documented.

Process

1. List existing picnic areas and other day use areas.
2. Identify known accessible picnic and other day use opportunities.
3. Provide information on accessible day use opportunities to the public; information should be in sufficient detail to allow potential users to make an informed decision about their ability to use the facilities provided. Emphasize providing the information to persons with disabilities and organizations which target service to persons with disabilities.

4. Identify the most heavily used day use areas.
5. Survey the most heavily used day use areas and provide detailed information to users about the barriers and accessibility of each.
6. Group all day use areas by:
 - a. Their association with a community, geographic area, or region and/or,
 - b. Their primary attraction or experience. As an example, Auk Recreation Area might be grouped with all other day use sites associated with Juneau and further subgrouped with sites whose primary experience is picnicking and/or whose primary attraction is association with saltwater.
7. Prioritize day use area groups identified in the previous step (separate plans may be done for each group), reflecting the needs/desires of the public, to guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.
8. Determine target level of accessibility for each day use area utilizing the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and striving to ensure accessibility to the range of experiences provided in each group.
9. Identify potential action items to improve accessibility of the picnicking/day use program.
 - a. Known opportunities to improve accessibility (e.g.: a picnic area with topography, grades, and/or other site factors suggesting easy access potential).
 - b. Known barriers to accessibility (e.g.: an inaccessible toilet(s) in an otherwise accessible picnic area).
 - c. Need for additional survey information (e.g.: insufficient information is known about a day use site to determine accessibility level or to identify specific actions needed to improve accessibility).
 - d. Need to locate and develop a new day use facility (e.g.: the work done to date has identified a day use experience without an appropriate level of accessibility and little potential for retrofitting existing facilities/sites).
10. Prioritize and schedule identified action items. Each forest/area will determine and document criteria for setting priorities. Suggested emphasis is on improving the accessibility of high-use facilities, providing information to all people on accessible opportunities, and ensuring that everyone has access to all the experiences being provided.

PUBLIC RECREATION CABIN PROGRAM

Goals

1. Universal design principles are incorporated into the planning and development of all new cabins and cabin sites and, when appropriate and to the extent practical, in retrofits of existing facilities.
2. The accessibility of each recreation cabin site is commensurate with its setting and the desired recreation experience.
3. All recreation cabin users have access to a variety of experiences with varying degrees of challenges commensurate with the setting.
4. Information on the accessibility of public recreation cabins is accessible to people with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairments, developmental disabilities, hearing impairments, etc. A variety of information formats are available, as necessary.

Standards and Guidelines

Strive to provide at least one fully accessible cabin and cabin site in each cabin group identified in step 4, below, with one exception: If all the cabins in a group are in a designated Wilderness, strive to provide at least one fully accessible cabin in that group but no site modifications are required strictly to accommodate accessibility (see Wilderness Program).

"Cabin site" is defined as the use area and primary attractions in the immediate geographical proximity of a cabin.

For planning purposes, administrative units will coordinate with adjacent administrative units to identify and consider collectively the cabin groups with common primary access points.

New cabins will meet accessibility standards; minor exceptions may exist in response to other public demands or needs.

New potential cabin sites will be assessed prior to selection for site conditions conducive to ease of access; attempts will be made to select locations with a minimum of natural barriers to accessibility.

Public participation will be solicited and documented in steps 5, 6, 7, and 8, of the process outlined below.

Rationale used in making decisions, determining target levels and priorities, and developing criteria will be documented.

Process

1. List existing cabins.
2. Identify known accessible cabins and cabin sites being sure to distinguish between the cabin structure and the cabin site/attractions.
3. Provide information on accessible cabins and cabin sites to the public; information should be in sufficient detail, addressing the cabin structure and the cabin site/attractions separately, to allow potential users to make an informed decision about the cabin's ability to meet their needs. Emphasize providing the information to persons with disabilities and organizations which target service to persons with disabilities.
4. Group cabins according to:
 - a. Their primary access point. For example, the majority of users of the Berners Bay Cabin either originate in Juneau, or pass through Juneau immediately prior to arriving at the cabin; Juneau is, therefore, the primary point of access for the Berners Bay Cabin.
 - b. Their primary attraction or association. In most cases this will be determined by the type of water body associated with the cabin, e.g.: saltwater or freshwater lake or river. As an example, Berners Bay Cabin might be grouped with all other saltwater cabins whose primary point of access is Juneau.
5. Prioritize cabin groups identified in the previous step (separate plans may be done for each group), reflecting the needs/desires of the public, to guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.
6. Determine target level of accessibility for each recreation cabin, striving to ensure accessibility to the range of experiences provided in each group.
7. Identify potential action items to improve accessibility of the cabin program.
 - a. Known opportunities to improve site accessibility at existing cabins (e.g.: a cabin with topography, grades, and/or other site factors suggesting easy access potential).
 - b. Known structural or environmental barriers to accessibility (e.g.: knob handles, instead of levers, on door(s); persistent shoreline driftwood or other site conditions not reasonably conducive to improving accessibility).
 - c. Need for additional survey information (e.g.: a cabin group has been identified but insufficient information has been gathered to determine existing accessibility status or needs and/or to determine which cabins or cabin sites have the best potential for improving accessibility).

- d. Need to locate and develop a new cabin (e.g.: the work done to date has identified a cabin group with no accessible cabin/site and little or no potential to retrofit existing cabins/sites to be accessible).

8. Prioritize and schedule identified action items. Each forest/area will determine and document criteria for setting priorities. Emphasize providing at least one fully-accessible cabin and cabin site in each of the cabin groups identified in step 4 above and providing information to all people on accessible opportunities.

WILDERNESS PROGRAM

Goals

1. Decisions regarding use of Wilderness by persons with disabilities are consistent, appropriate, and objective.
2. See also Public Recreation Cabin Program.

Standards and Guidelines

Wilderness resource preservation is the priority in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Nothing in the Wilderness Act prohibits use of a wheelchair in a wilderness area by an individual whose disability requires use of a wheelchair. The term "wheelchair" means a device designed solely for use by a mobility-impaired person for locomotion that is suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area.

Agencies are not required to construct any facilities or modify any conditions of lands within Wilderness to facilitate use by persons with disabilities.

Process

1. When modifications to protect the resource are made, managers are encouraged to assess the situation for potential application of universal design principles. If a facility or site change will damage or diminish wilderness resource values, it should not be considered. If it enhances, maintains, or does not change wilderness resource values, it shall be considered.
2. When questions arise concerning use of the National Wilderness Preservation System by persons with disabilities, utilize the "Wilderness Access Decision Tool" developed by Wilderness Inquiry in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the USDI Bureau of Land Management. This tool will help managers make appropriate, objective, and consistent decisions regarding use of Wilderness by persons with disabilities.

ADMINISTRATIVE SITES/STRUCTURES

Goals

1. Reasonable accommodations are provided for disabled employees.
2. New administrative facilities are designed to be free of architectural barriers. Existing administrative facilities are free of architectural barriers to the extent feasible and practicable.

Standards and Guidelines

All new construction, replacement, or renovations of administrative facilities will meet accessibility standards. All repairs shall incorporate accessibility standards to the extent practical. Available technology, work space management, and remodeling will be used to provide reasonable accommodations in multi-story structures until such time that the facility becomes a priority for structural retrofit or replacement.

Process

1. Identify potential action items to improve accessibility of administrative facilities including surveys yet to be completed or updated, transition plans yet to be completed or updated, and retrofit work identified in completed surveys.
2. Prioritize action items using the following criteria, in order of precedence: (This prioritization may guide the order in which transition plans are accomplished.)
 - a. Critical and immediate needs. An example of this would be a lack of reasonable accommodation in the work place for an existing employee who has a disability. Another example might be lack of accessible housing for an employee who has an immediate family member with a disability when housing is/was provided as a condition of employment.
 - b. Facilities that serve a large number visitors and/or employees.
 - c. Facilities where public meetings are held when few, if any, meeting facilities are available for rent or lease in the community.
 - d. Facilities in communities where accessible amenities are commonplace.
 - e. Buildings designed after 1968.
 - f. Multiple action items identified within each of the five previous criterion will be prioritized in the following order with the highest priority listed first: 1. Public facilities in or associated with offices (e.g.: parking, building access, toilets, reception, conference room, individual offices commonly visited by the public); 2. Barracks, when five percent of barracks units are not fully accessible; 3. Single family dwellings, when five percent of or at least one single family dwelling is not fully accessible; 4. General office space; 5. Storage; 6. Field Camps.

Attachment B

SAMPLE TRANSITION PLAN

for an administrative unit or geographical area which has been
determined not to have an accessible camping program

REGION 10

ACCESSIBILITY TRANSITION PLAN (or ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY)

Tongass National Forest, Stikine Area
Wrangell Ranger District

PROGRAM Camping

PROGRAM AREA (geographical, administrative, other) LMN Island

PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING PLAN (indicate method of public participation solicitation) Jane White, Fst Landscape Architect; John Black, District Recreation Technician; Joe Red, District Engineering Technician; Julie Green, Advocate for Persons with Disabilities; John Brown, private individual.

| Obstacles | Planned Actions | Cost | Year Planned | Year Complete |
|---|--------------------------------|----------|--------------|---------------|
| ABC Campground | | | | |
| Table top overhang = 12" | Extend table tops, 12 tables | \$1,200 | FY 1999 | |
| Toilet too small 3'x3' | Replace one single-hole toilet | \$10,000 | FY 2000 | |
| XYZ Campground | | | | |
| Inaccessible tables can not be retrofit | Replace 5 picnic tables | \$1,500 | FY 1999 | |

Responsible Official:

Wrangell District Ranger

Date

Intentionally
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Attachment C

PROJECT SUMMARY

COST/BENEFIT RATING WORKSHEET
for
SET-ASIDE CNRF/CNTR ACCESSIBILITY FUNDS
(11/98)

PROJECT _____ **FOREST/RD** _____

| CRITERIA | SCORE |
|--|--------------|
| 1. Protects Accessible Capital Investment (0 - 100 pts) | |
| 2. Meets Identified Need (0 - 80 pts) | |
| 3. Satisfies Range of Accessibility Needs (0 - 70 pts) | |
| 4. Provides Special Management Opportunities (0 - 60 pts) | |
| TOTAL SCORE (310 possible) | |

NOTES:

1. Forests/Ranger Districts are **NOT** to score each criteria. Scoring will be done by the Regional CIP Planning Team, composed of RO and Forest Recreation Staff, using the attached "Criteria Description" as a guide.

2. Forests/Ranger Districts shall provide a supporting statement for each criteria. (Attach a separate sheet as necessary.) Limit the statement to one paragraph per criteria. Supporting statements for each criteria should be distinctive and specific to the criteria they support; statement(s) provided for one criteria will generally not be repeated for a second criteria.

3. Criteria are listed in priority order. In the event of a tie cost/benefit value rating between two projects, this priority ranking will be used to resolve the tie.

CRITERIA BY PRIORITY AND RATING for SET-ASIDE ACCESSIBILITY FUNDS

The following criteria are listed in priority order. In the event of a tie score between two projects, this priority ranking will be used to resolve the tie. Provide a statement of rationale for each criteria rating. Limit the statement to one paragraph per criteria. Supporting statements for each criteria should be distinctive and specific to the criteria they support; statement(s) provided for one criteria will generally not be repeated for a second criteria.

1. PROTECTS ACCESSIBLE CAPITAL INVESTMENT (0-100 points) Project will rehabilitate or reconstruct an existing site, facility, or trail(s) whose accessibility is threatened or has been compromised by severe deterioration or other occurrences such as fire, flood, or heavy vandalism.

RATING SCORES

- Score Range: 1-25 - Site, facility, or trail is functional and accessible as designed, but continued neglect will result in gradual deterioration and reduction in accessibility.
- Score Range: 26-50 - Site, facility, or trail is functional and accessible as designed, but damage or neglect has put the accessibility at imminent risk of loss.
- Score Range: 51-75 - Site, facility, or trail is no longer accessible as designed. Demand for an equivalent experience can be met at an alternate site.
- Score Range: 76-100 - Rehabilitation is necessary to restore accessibility to a previously accessible site, facility, or trail. Demand cannot be met at an alternate site.

2. MEETS IDENTIFIED NEED (0-80 points) Project is specifically designed to meet identified and documented public needs related to accessibility of a recreation site, facility, or trail.

RATING SCORES

- Score Range: 1-25 - Project needed to continue to provide existing level of customer satisfaction, or to prevent increase in customer complaints.
- Score Range: 26-55 - Project where documented analysis, with public involvement, indicates the need for site modifications or new developments to improve accessibility and/or provide new, accessible, recreation experiences.
- Score Range: 56-80 - Project where documented analysis, with public involvement, indicates the need for site modifications or new developments to improve accessibility or to provide new, accessible, recreation experiences. Project must maintain or enhance an attraction as a tourist destination.

3. SATISFIES RANGE OF ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS (0-70 points) Project satisfies the needs of multiple people with a variety of disabilities.

RATING SCORES

- Score Range: 1-15 - Project improves accessibility but does not result in the accessibility level of "easy" as described in the "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation Design Guide".
- Score Range: 16-30 - Project improves accessibility to the "easy" level, for persons with mobility impairments only as described in the "Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation Design Guide".
- Score Range: 31-50 - Project provides "easy" accessibility to persons with mobility impairments and includes some features which will enrich the experience of persons with other disabilities, e.g. adds tactile features for persons with visual impairments.
- Score Range: 51-70 - Project provides "easy" accessibility to persons with mobility impairments and to persons with a wide range of other disabilities, e.g. visual impairments, hearing loss, and learning disabled.

4. PROVIDES SPECIAL MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES (0-60 points) Applies to projects with the backing of a specific group of constituents with special needs.

RATING SCORES

- Score Range: 0-15 - Project has the backing of a specific group of constituents with special needs who are willing to contribute funds or work toward completion. Contribution will not exceed 50% of the cost of the project.
- Score Range: 16-30 - Project has the backing of a specific group of constituents with special needs who are willing to contribute funds or work toward completion. Contribution will exceed 50% of the cost of the project.
- Score Range: 31-45 - Project has the backing of constituents with special needs who are willing to contribute funds or work toward completion. Contribution will exceed 50% of the cost of the project And project will meet the needs of users with special needs outside of the contributing user group.
- Score Range: 46-60 - Project has the backing of a specific group of constituents with special needs who are willing to contribute funds or work toward completion. Contribution will approach or equal 100% of the cost of the project.

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